

SUMMARY NOTES CITY COUNCIL SIGN ORDINANCE TASK FORCE

**May 29, 2013 – 4:00 PM
KCDC, 901 N. Broadway**

Call to Order

Chairman Duane Grieve called to order the May 29, 2013 meeting of the City Council Sign Ordinance Task Force at 4:00 p.m. in the Board Room at KCDC, 901 N. Broadway.

Roll Call

Members present:

Joyce Feld
Duane Grieve, Chair
Don Parnell
Gary Hayes
Melissa McAdams
Jim Nixon
George Wallace, Vice-Chair
Bill Weigel

Members absent:

None.

Staff Members present:

Mark Donaldson, MPC
Anne Wallace, Redevelopment Office
Cindy Mitchell, City Council Office
Angela Rauber, Law Department

Staff members absent:

Anita Cash, Retired from City of Knoxville

Acceptance of Summary Notes

Motion: George Wallace moved to accept the Summary Notes from May 22, 2013.
Second: Joyce Feld.
Vote: Unanimous "Aye"
Disposition: Summary Notes accepted.

Opening Comments

Chairman Grieve made opening comments and announced that the lines are still open for written communication. Please send all written comments regarding signs to cmitchell@cityofknoxville.org.

Information and Discussion

- Mark Donaldson guided the Task Force through the document entitled, "Proposed Modifications to Public Review Text" dated May 29, 2013. (See attached).
Task Force members participated in discussion of the document.

Next Steps

- Angela Rauber and Councilman Grieve to retrieve photos of various signs and their dimensions.
- Next meeting: To be announced.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 5:40 p.m.

PROPOSED MODIFICATIONS TO PUBLIC REVIEW TEXT
For May 29 Task Force Consideration

C. DEFINITIONS

Awning or canopy sign - A sign that is comprised of the application of words, pictures, symbols and/or logos to an awning or canopy attached to the ground floor of buildings to provides shelter and shade for pedestrians, printed or sewn-onto durable material and hung over doorways and storefronts that provide shelter and shade for pedestrians, which shall be limited to street-level businesses.

New Definition

Sidewalk Sign - A sign that is made up of two opposing sign faces, hinged at the top and set up in a triangle shape with one side of the triangle being the ground surface. Such sign shall be placed on the ground or paved surface and may be placed on a sidewalk within public right-of-way or public property within fifteen (15) feet of the entry to a business. For these purposes a sidewalk sign is not a portable sign.

DEFINITIONS WITH CHANGED OFF-PREMISE (ADVERTISING) AND ON-PREMISE (BUSINESS) SIGN TERMS

Advertising Off-premise sign - A sign which that directs attention to a business, commodity, service or entertainment conducted, sold or offered elsewhere than on the premises and only incidentally on the premises if at all.

There are 39 uses of the word advertising in this section. 15 uses can remain as they are, 3 uses can be deleted, 5 uses can be replaced with the word "sign" and 16 uses can be replaced with the term "off-premise."

Business On-premise sign - A sign which that directs attention to the business or profession conducted a business, commodity, service or entertainment conducted, sold or offered on the premises on which the sign is erected. A "for sale", "to let" or "information" sign shall be deemed a business on-premise sign.

There are 52 uses of the word business in this section. 37 uses can remain as they are, 4 uses can be deleted and 11 uses can be replaced with the term "on-premise."

By changing advertising sign to off-premise sign and business sign to on-premise sign and making the recommended changes to the use of the terms, the previously proposed definitions for off-premise and on-premise signs can be deleted.

Billboard - A type of advertising off-premise sign having more than one hundred square feet of display surface which is either erected on the ground or attached to or supported by a building or structure.

Development directory sign - A business ground or monument sign identifying a shopping center, office park, commercial subdivision, or similar mixed use or commercial development, and listing individual businesses or tenants within the unified development, including businesses not located on the lot on which the sign is located. A development directory sign is not classified as an advertising off-premise sign.

PROPOSED MODIFICATIONS TO PUBLIC REVIEW TEXT

For May 29 Task Force Consideration

NEW DEFINITION

Menu Board – An ~~type of business~~ **attached or detached** sign primarily designed for the display of menu items and prices for the purpose of placing orders for such items in conjunction with a restaurant utilizing drive-through or curbside service.

Portable sign - All moveable or portable advertising **off-premise** or business **on-premise** signs mounted upon trailers or other structure(s) or device(s) designed to be transported with only incidental parking and assembling for reuse. **For these purposes a sidewalk sign is not a portable sign.**

Project directional sign – A ground or monument sign used to direct traffic from a collector or arterial street (as designated in the *Major Road Plan for Knoxville – Knox County, Tennessee*) to businesses located on the same or lower classification streets within the same unified development. A project directional sign is not classified as an advertising **off-premise** sign.

D. PROHIBITED SIGNS

The following signs are prohibited in all zone districts:

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7. Signs placed on a parked vehicle or trailer **visible from the public right-of-way** where the apparent **primary** purpose is to advertise a product or direct people to a business located on the same or ~~nearby~~ **another** property. For the purposes of this regulation, logos, identification or advertising on vehicles being operated in the normal course of business are not prohibited.

E. SIGNS EXEMPT FROM THESE REGULATIONS

The following signs are exempt from the regulations of this chapter but may be subject to other applicable laws and regulations:

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20. Official fraternal, religious or civic flags when mounted on permanent poles attached to the ground or building **when located on the same site as the fraternal, religious or civic organization, institution or building.**

F. SIGNS EXEMPT FROM PERMIT REQUIREMENT

The following signs are exempt from permit requirements, but subject to other regulations of this chapter:

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9. Umbrella signs which ~~do not exceed twenty-five (25) percent of the surface area of the umbrella cloth.~~

PROPOSED MODIFICATIONS TO PUBLIC REVIEW TEXT
For May 29 Task Force Consideration

G. CRITERIA FOR MEASUREMENTS

2. Sign Height.

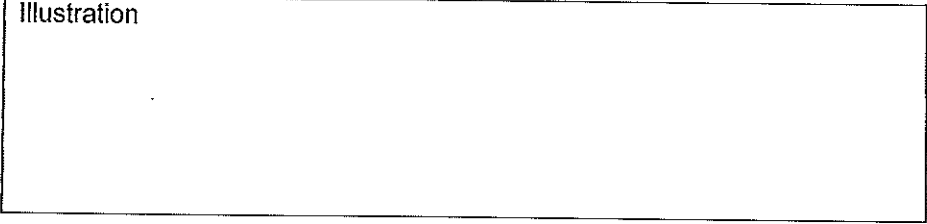
- a. Sign height shall be computed as the distance from the base of the sign structure to the top of the highest attached component of the sign, using as the base of the sign structure either of the following provisions providing the greatest height:
 - (1) the normal grade of the property below the sign, or
 - (2) the roadway surface at the nearest edge of pavement of the street that provides primary access to the site.
- b. The normal grade of the property shall be construed for this purpose to be the existing grade prior to development or the final established grade after development, exclusive of any filling, berming, mounding or excavating solely for the purpose of locating a sign.
- c. For the purpose of determining height limit exception near interstate highways, roadway surface shall include the roadway surface of ramps and flyovers.

4. Primary Building Elevation.

For the purposes of determining maximum allowed sign area for attached signs:

- a. The primary building elevation shall be any elevation that faces onto a street right-of-way and (1) has the principal entrance to the building, or (2) has an entry used primarily for customers or clients.
- b. The area of the primary building elevation shall be determined as follows:
 - (1) When architectural elevations are provided that accurately and to scale depict the elevation of the structure, the wall area of the elevation shall be the area of the vertical wall surface of the building elevation exclusive of roofs, parapets and false facia; except that a parapet on the primary building elevation, if it is part of a parapet of a uniform height on three sides of a structure and of a similar and uniform building material may be included in the elevation area, but decorative parapet extensions of irregular height on one or two sides of a structure are excluded from the calculation.
 - (2) When architectural plans are not provided, it shall be assumed that the height of the elevation of the first floor is twelve feet and that the height of the elevation of all floors above the first floor is ten (10) feet per floor. The area of the elevation is then calculated based on the formula: [building length x 12 ft. (first floor)] + [building length x 10 ft. per each additional floor] = elevation area.

Illustration



PROPOSED MODIFICATIONS TO PUBLIC REVIEW TEXT
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H. GENERAL SIGN STANDARDS

1. Minimum Height Limit Near Interstate Highways

Within one hundred (100) feet of the right-of-way of an interstate highway, the height limit of the zone district may be exceeded so the bottom of detached signs shall be not more than twenty (20) feet above the roadway surface of the interstate highway.

I recommend reducing the current distance for this exception to the maximum sign height regulation from 500 feet to 100 feet.

2. Minimum Setbacks

a. All detached signs shall be set back no less than ten (10) feet to a street right-of-way or fifteen (15) from the edge of pavement, whichever is greater, ~~unless such sign is at least ten (10) feet above the ground and vision under the sign is only incidentally obstructed by supporting members,~~

I recommend eliminating the exception from the setback regulations for signs that have 10 feet of clearance to the bottom of the sign. I can find no other sign codes that have this sort of exception: having checked Nashville, Memphis, Brentwood, Farragut, Asheville, Charlotte, Lexington.

4. Illumination Standards

Sign illumination shall be meet the following standards:

a. General Requirements. ~~No sign legible from any public right-of-way or public plaza shall utilize:~~

(1) In basic residential and all office zone districts internal sign illumination shall be prohibited

Signs may be externally illuminated, provided no light source exceeds seventy-five (75) footcandles of surface illumination nor is visible from streets or adjacent property;

(2) In other nonresidential zone districts internally illuminated signs shall not exceed two hundred (200) foot-lamberts and externally illuminated signs shall not exceed seventy-five (75) footcandles of surface illumination;

(3) In all office districts, illuminated attached signs shall be limited to the building façade facing a street that is adjacent to the property and illuminated detached signs shall be limited to locations between the building and a street that is adjacent to the property.

b. External Illumination. Externally illuminated signs shall be shielded from adjacent buildings and streets, and shall not be sufficient brightness to cause glare or other nuisances to adjacent land uses or traffic. Projecting light fixtures used for externally illuminated signs must be simple and unobtrusive in appearance, and not obscure the sign.

c. Internal Illumination. Internal illumination shall provide steady, stationary lighting through translucent materials.

d. All electrical service to detached signs shall be placed underground. Electrical service to attached signs shall be concealed from public view.

PROPOSED MODIFICATIONS TO PUBLIC REVIEW TEXT
For May 29 Task Force Consideration

L. SIGNS PERMITTED BY SPECIFIC ZONE DISTRICT
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5. Office zone districts (O-1, O-2, and O-3)

b. *Types of signs and dimensions allowed.* In office districts, the following signs on a nonresidential parcel or lot shall be allowed, subject to the following specified dimensional requirements:

(1) Attached signs, including arcade and hanging signs, awning and canopy signs, bulletin board signs, changeable letter reader boards, historic and landmark signs, identification signs, marquee signs, projecting signs, roof signs, shingle signs, temporary signs, wall signs, and window signs, with a total allowed sign area equal to five (5) percent of the **wall area of the** primary building elevation(s), provided that the sign area may be used on any elevation of the building.

6. Commercial and Industrial zone districts (C-1, C-2, C-3, C-4, C-5, C-6, C-7, PC-1, PC-2, SC-1, SC-2, SC-3, BP-1, I-1, I-2, I-3 and I-4)

a. *Types of signs and dimensions allowed.* In commercial and industrial districts, the following signs on a nonresidential parcel or lot shall be allowed, subject to the following specified dimensional requirements:

(2) Attached signs, including arcade and hanging signs, awning and canopy signs, bulletin board signs, changeable letter reader boards, historic and landmark signs, identification signs, marquee signs, projecting signs, roof signs, shingle signs, temporary signs, wall signs, and window signs with a total allowed sign area equal to ten (10) percent of the **wall area of the** primary building elevation(s), providing that the sign area may be used on any elevation of the building.

7. Mixed Use zone districts (TC-1 and TND-1)

c. In TC-1 and TND-1 zone districts, the following signs on a nonresidential parcel or lot shall be allowed, subject to the following specified dimensional requirements:

(1) Attached signs, including arcade and hanging signs, awning and canopy signs, historic and landmark signs marquee signs, projecting signs, shingle signs, temporary signs, and wall signs with a total allowable sign area of five (5) percent of the **wall area of the** primary building elevations, providing that the sign area may be used on any elevation of the building. The maximum sign area for individual projecting signs shall be twelve (12) square feet; and for hanging, arcade or shingle signs, six (6) square feet.

PROPOSED MODIFICATIONS TO PUBLIC REVIEW TEXT
For May 29 Task Force Consideration

6. Commercial and Industrial zone districts (C-1, C-2, C-3, C-4, C-5, C-6, C-7, PC-1, PC-2, SC-1, SC-2, SC-3, BP-1, I-1, I-2, I-3 and I-4)

THREE ALTERNATIVE TABLES L.6.1

Table L.6.1. **A** [Heights as approved by City Council]

Maximum Height and Sign Area for Primary Detached Signs				
Street Classification of the lot frontage to which the detached sign is oriented	Monument or Column		All Others	
	Maximum Height	Maximum Sign Area	Maximum Height	Maximum Sign Area
Property Within 500 feet of an Interstate Interchange	10 ft	64 sf	25 ft	160 sf
Property Adjacent to Interstate ROW	10 ft	64 sf	20 ft	64 sf
Property Fronting Other Federally-Designated Highways	8 ft	36 sf	15 ft	49 sf
All Other Eligible Property	6 ft	25 sf	10 ft	32 sf

Table L.6.1. **B** [Alternative Heights]

Maximum Height and Sign Area for Primary Detached Signs				
Street Classification of the lot frontage to which the detached sign is oriented	Monument or Column		All Others	
	Maximum Height	Maximum Sign Area	Maximum Height	Maximum Sign Area
Within 500 feet of an Interstate Interchange	12 ft	100 sf	50 ft	195 sf
Property Adjacent to Interstate ROW	10 ft	64 sf	50 ft	195 sf
Property Fronting Other Federally-Designated Highways	10 ft	64 sf	35 ft	???
All Others	???	???	35 ft	???

Table L.6.1. **C** [Heights as recommended by MPC]

Maximum Height and Sign Area for Primary Detached Signs				
Street Classification of the lot frontage to which the detached sign is oriented	Monument or Column		All Others	
	Maximum Height	Maximum Sign Area	Maximum Height	Maximum Sign Area
Property Within 500 feet of an Interstate Interchange	12 ft	100 sf	50 ft	160 sf
Property Adjacent to Interstate ROW	12 ft	100 sf	35 ft	144 sf
Property Fronting Other Federally-Designated Highways	10 ft	64 sf	20 ft	100 sf
All Other Eligible Property	8 ft	36 sf	15 ft	64 sf

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OTHER ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION:

DETACHED SIGNS ON LOTS THAT HAVE TWO OR THREE ROAD FRONTAGES IF ONE OF THE ROAD FRONTAGES IS THE INTERSTATE.

THE NECESSITY OF CONTINUED REFERENCES TO DATES WHEN ORDINANCE BECAME EFFECTIVE CHANGING DIMENSIONAL REQUIREMENTS OR PROHIBITING SIGN TYPES.

ABANDONED SIGN TIME REQUIREMENTS

ROOF SIGNS

- Office districts
- Other districts